



Indiana Department of Education

SUPPORTING STUDENT SUCCESS

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TO: Directors of Special Education

FROM: Sharon Knoth, Acting Director of Special Education

RE: ISTAR – KR Assessments for 2008/2009 School Year

DATE: February 9, 2009

This Memo is written to provide you and your teachers and early childhood coordinators with information on requirements of performance outcome measures for children in Part B preschool programs.

In an effort to align reporting requirements from the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs with meaningful assessment tools for local use, the Indiana Department of Education has released the new ISTAR-KR (Kindergarten Readiness) assessment. Following a number of years of research and development, this revised instrument has been reviewed by many local school personnel who have reported the layout and content to be more meaningful and much easier to use than the earlier ISTAR tool. Performance threads display a continuum of items that are aligned to the Core Standard areas as used in Indiana Academic Standards for kindergarteners. In addition, physical skills, personal care skills, and social emotional skills are measured. The scores will be standardized by summer of 2009 in order to provide age expectancy comparisons in the areas of:

- 1) Positive social-emotional skills,
- 2) Acquisition and use of knowledge, and
- 3) Use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs.

All children eligible for a Part B early childhood program will need to have an ISTAR-KR assessment finalized:

- a) within 6 weeks of entering a Part B preschool program,
- b) within 6 weeks of each birth date, and,
- c) within 6 weeks of exiting the preschool program due to:
 - (i) transitioning to kindergarten,
 - (ii) exit from special education,
 - (iii) leaving the state, or,
 - (iv) reaching age 6 while enrolled in the preschool program.

An assessment completed within six weeks of a student's date of birth can also serve one of the other purposes if any two or more of the timeframes listed at (c) above coincide. Students who move within the State continue with the assessment schedule. There is only one entrance and one exit per student even if the student transfers between school districts. If a student was not assessed during the first half of the 2008- 2009 school year but would have met one of the criteria above during that timeframe, an assessment must be completed prior to the end of March.

The ISTAR technology will provide compliance monitoring tools on the dashboard to support timely completion of these assessments. In addition, there will be integrated utility with ISTAR7, Indiana's electronic IEP. Please visit <http://ican.doe.in.state> for more information.